A UKRAINIAN FAIRY-TALE

THE MITTEN

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An old man went walking in the forest. His dog ran behind him. The old man walked on and on. By chance he dropped a mitten.

A mouse went scurrying by. She climbed into the mitten and said,
"I shall live here."

A frog came hop-hop-hopping along and said,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse. And who are you?"

"I'm Hoppity-Skippity-Frog. Let me in, too!"

"All right."

So now there were four of them. Next a wolf ran up to the mitten and said,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse, Hoppity-Skippity-Frog, Hurry-Scurry-Hare and Friendly Fox. And who are you?"

"I'm Grey Wolf. Let me in, too!"

"All right."

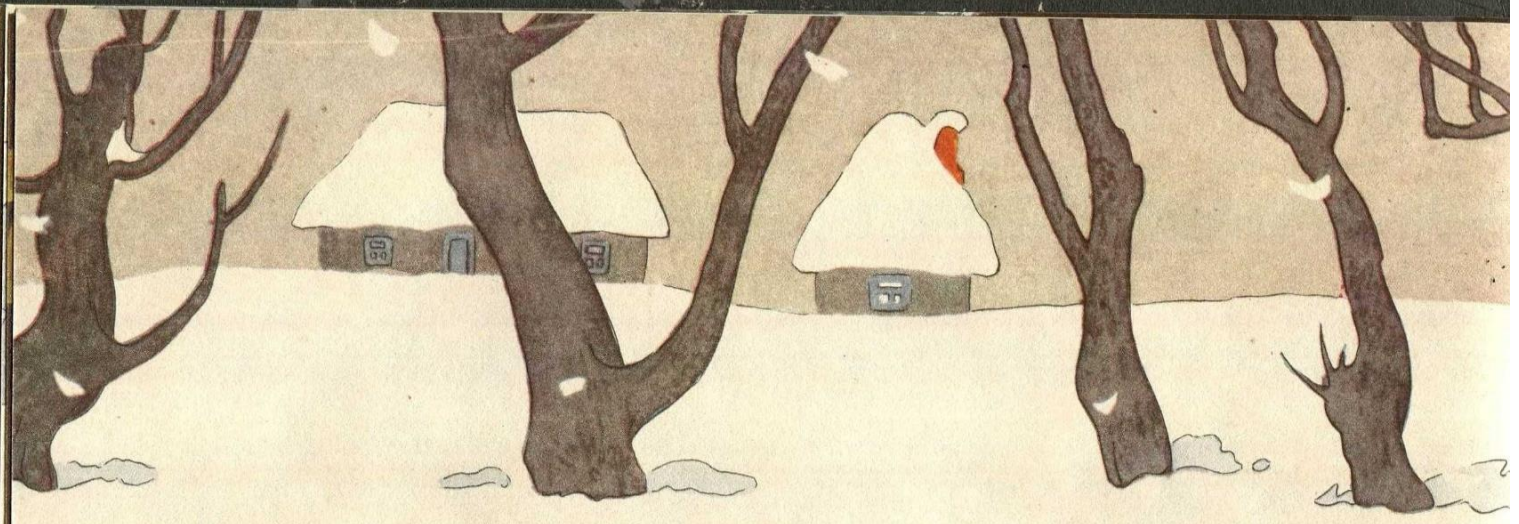
So now there were two of them. A hare hopped by. He came up to the mitten and said,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse and Hoppity-Skippity-Frog. And who are you?"

"I'm Hurry-Scurry-Hare. Let me in, too!"

"All right!"



So now there were three of them. A fox ran up and said,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse, Hoppity-Skippity-Frog and Hurry-Scurry-Hare. And who are you?"

"I'm Friendly Fox. Let me in, too!"

"All right."

So now there were four of them. Next a wolf ran up to the mitten and said,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse, Hoppity-Skippity-Frog, Hurry-Scurry-Hare and Friendly Fox. And who are you?"

"I'm Grey Wolf. Let me in, too!"

"All right."

So the wolf climbed in, too. Now there were five of them. Suddenly, a wild boar appeared.

"Grunt-grunt! Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse, Hoppity-Skippity-Frog, Hurry-Scurry-Hare, Friendly Fox and Grey Wolf. Who are you?"

"I'm Tusky Boar. Let me in, too!"

"There's no room left!"

"I'll squeese in. Please let me in!"

"Oh, well! Come on in."

So the boar climbed in, too. Now there were six of them. It was so crowded they could hardly move. Then there was a great cracking of branches and a bear appeared. He, too, went up to the mitten and he growled,

"Who lives in this mitten?"

"Nibbly-Mouse, Hoppity-Skippity-Frog, Hurry-Scurry-Hare, Friendly Fox, Grey Wolf and Tusky Boar. Who are you?"

"Grr-grr, there are so many of you here! I'm Brown Bear. Let me in, too!"

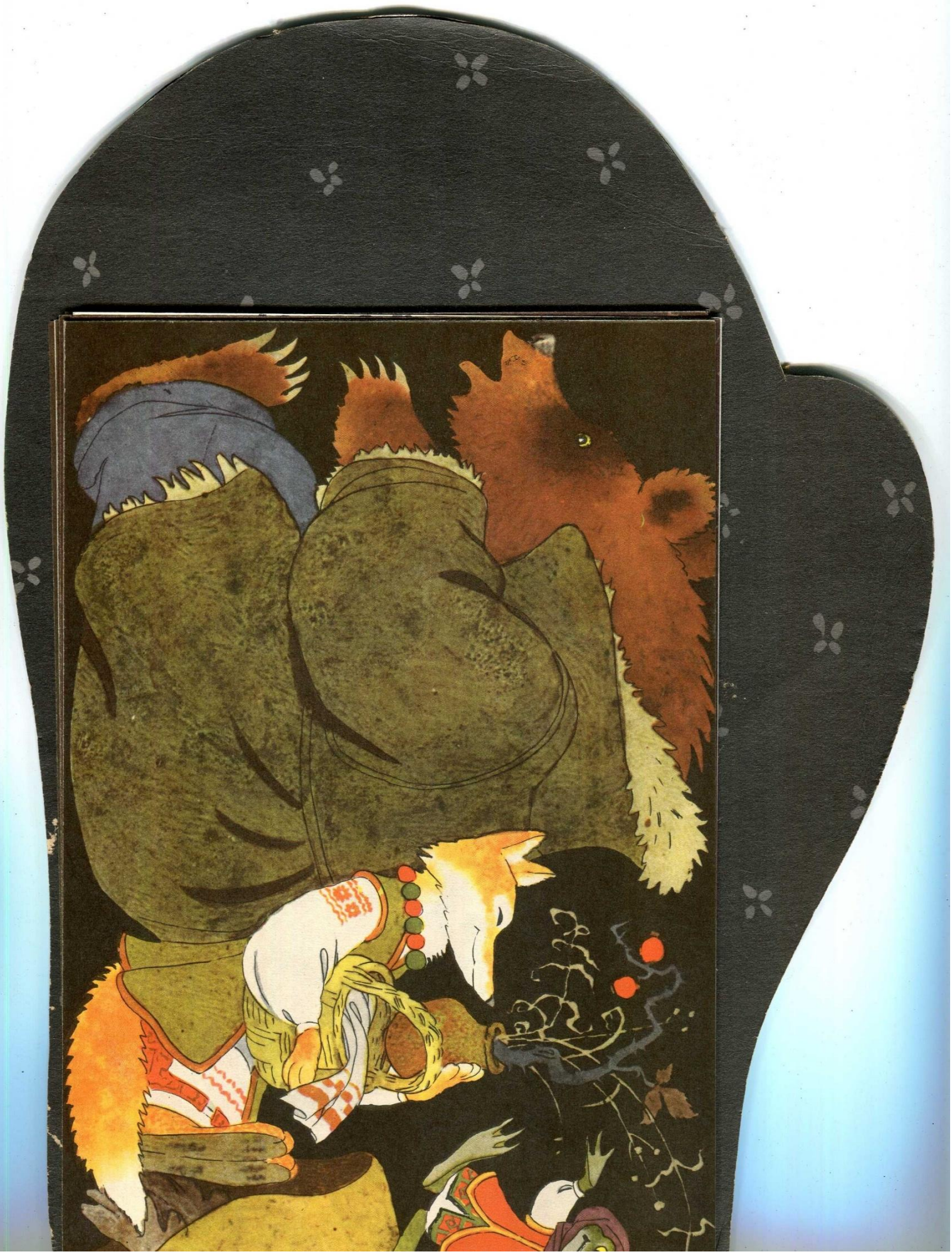
"How can we? We're ever so crowded!"

"Don't worry. I'll squeeze in!"

"Oh, all right. But don't take up too much room!"

So the Brown Bear climbed in, too. Now there were seven of them. It was so crowded that the mitten seemed about to burst.

After a while the old man noticed he had lost his mitten and turned back to look for it.



His dog ran on ahead of him. It ran and ran until it found the mitten. Something was moving inside it!

"Bow-wow-wow!"

The animals were so frightened they rushed out of the mitten and ran helter-skelter through the forest. Then the old man came along. He picked up his mitten and walked on.

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Illustrated by E. Bulatov and O. Vasiliev

Translated by Tom Botting

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